during the visit of the Chinese Foreign Minister, India and China launched 'India-China Year of Friendship Through Tourism.' A joint logo and a monthly Action Plan till January 2008 were released on this occasion. Both countries have agreed to open tourism offices within this year. Based on the Consular Convention signed in 1991, Government have been reviewing and modifying guidelines for grant of visas to Chinese nationals to facilitate their travel to India for business, tourism and education.

Indians detected in Pakistani jails

*78. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Indians visited Pakistan early this year and were allowed by Pakistan Government to visit certain jails in that country in search of their kin who were expected to have been languishing in Pak jails after 1965 and 1971 wars or otherwise strayed into that country without proper documents;

(b) if so, the number of Indians detected in Pakistani jails; and

(c) the action taken so far by Indian Government for their release and repatriation?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Subsequent to the agreement reached during my visit to Islamabad in January 2007, a group comprising thirteen members of the families of missing defence personnel visited Pakistan from June 1.14.2007. They visited ten jails in Pakistan. Indian prisoners in the above prisons were presented before the relatives. No missing Defence personnel were located. However, it was confirmed that one of the missing personnel had been killed in action and not taken Prisoner of War.

Pruning of Centrally sponsored schemes

*79. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission's move to drastically prune Centrally sponsored schemes from 155 to just 24 and transfer of a bulk of the schemes to States has not been approved by Government.;

(b) whether Planning Commission has decided to take a comprehensive look into all the 300-plus Centrally sponsored schemes and see that some non-performing ones could be weeded out and some other merged with similar schemes to address the issue of funds for the social sector programmes; and

(c) whether Commission has taken a decision to provide funds to all the schemes during the Eleventh Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) Plan Schemes are discontinued on the basis of Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) exercise and rationalization of Schemes during the course of a Plan. The primary purpose of ZBB exercise is to ensure convergence, efficiency and

efficacy of Schemes according to Plan priorities and targets and also the use of available resources in the most judicious and economically efficient manner. Such an exercise is done regularly. The ZBB exercise carried out for the Eleventh Plan for rationalizing 155 Schemes in operation in 2006-07 resulted in retention of 82 CSS for implementation during 2007-08 after weeding, merger and reclassification.

IT enabled office administration

*80. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Government's guidelines to earmark certain percentage of planned allocations to the Ministries to enhance usage of IT in the administration;

(b) whether such guidelines would also include training the personnel into IT-enabled office administration;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor, and whether Government would consider including the training in IT into the existing guidelines;

(d) whether it is a fact that certain Ministries/Departments have been using such funds for the procurement of office hardware other than computer and related hardware; and

(e) if so, the mechanism to monitor the proper usage of such earmarked funds?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission, based on the recommendations of the High Powered Committee for impoving administrative efficiency by using IT, has requested all Central Line Ministries/Departments to make provision of 2-3 percent of their plan/Budget for Programmes/Schemes relating to IT applications. It had also been conveyed to the Departments/Ministries that they could incur expenditure of an amount exceeding 2-3 percent of their budget (Plan or non-plan) for initiatives relating to IT including training, acquisition of hardware, software as well as development and maintenance of software. It was also clarified by the Planning Commission that this does not entail any additionalities by way of budgetary allocations.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) While Departments have been requested to incur this expenditure on IT, the usage of this money for IT is to be monitored by the Departments themselves, since this expenditure was to be made out of their existing budgetary allocations. However, no instances of usage of such funds for purposes other than IT have come to notice.

(e) Since the earmarking of 2-3 percent funds has to be made from within the existing budgetary allocations of all Departments/Ministries, the monitoring of such utilization is expected be done by the Departments/Ministries concerned.